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LIBRARY SERVICE FOR RURAL PEOPLE.

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NINETY PERCENT OF THE TWENTY-SEVEN MILLION AMERICANS WHO DID NOT HAVE ACCESS TO LOCAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN 1956 WERE FROM RURAL AREAS, WHILE ANOTHER FIFTY-THREE MILLION HAD ACCESS ONLY TO INADEQUATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE. THE PROBLEM ARISES FROM THE APPARENT DIFFICULTY OF PROVIDING GOOD LIBRARY SERVICE WHERE TOWNS ARE SMALL AND RURAL PEOPLE ARE WIDELY SCATTERED, BUT IT IS BEING SOLVED GRADUALLY BY BOOKMOBILE SERVICE AND BY SMALL BRANCHES OF LARGE REGIONAL LIBRARIES. THE SERVICE FROM BOTH OF THESE PLANS OFFERS A MUCH WIDER SELECTION OF BOOKS SINCE THE BOOKS ARE DISTRIBUTED FROM THE CENTRAL OR REGIONAL LIBRARY. AFTER THE READERS IN AN AREA HAVE FINISHED WITH A COLLECTION, THE BOOKS ARE RETURNED AND MORE ARE SELECTED. SPECIFIC REQUESTS FROM INDIVIDUAL READERS ARE ALSO ANSWERED BY THE REGIONAL LIBRARY. THE BOOK IS SENT TO EITHER THE NEAREST BRANCH (COMMUNITY) LIBRARY OR TO THE READER HIMSELF. THIS BOOKLET IS ALSO AVAILABLE FOR $0.15 FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS, U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20402. (CL)

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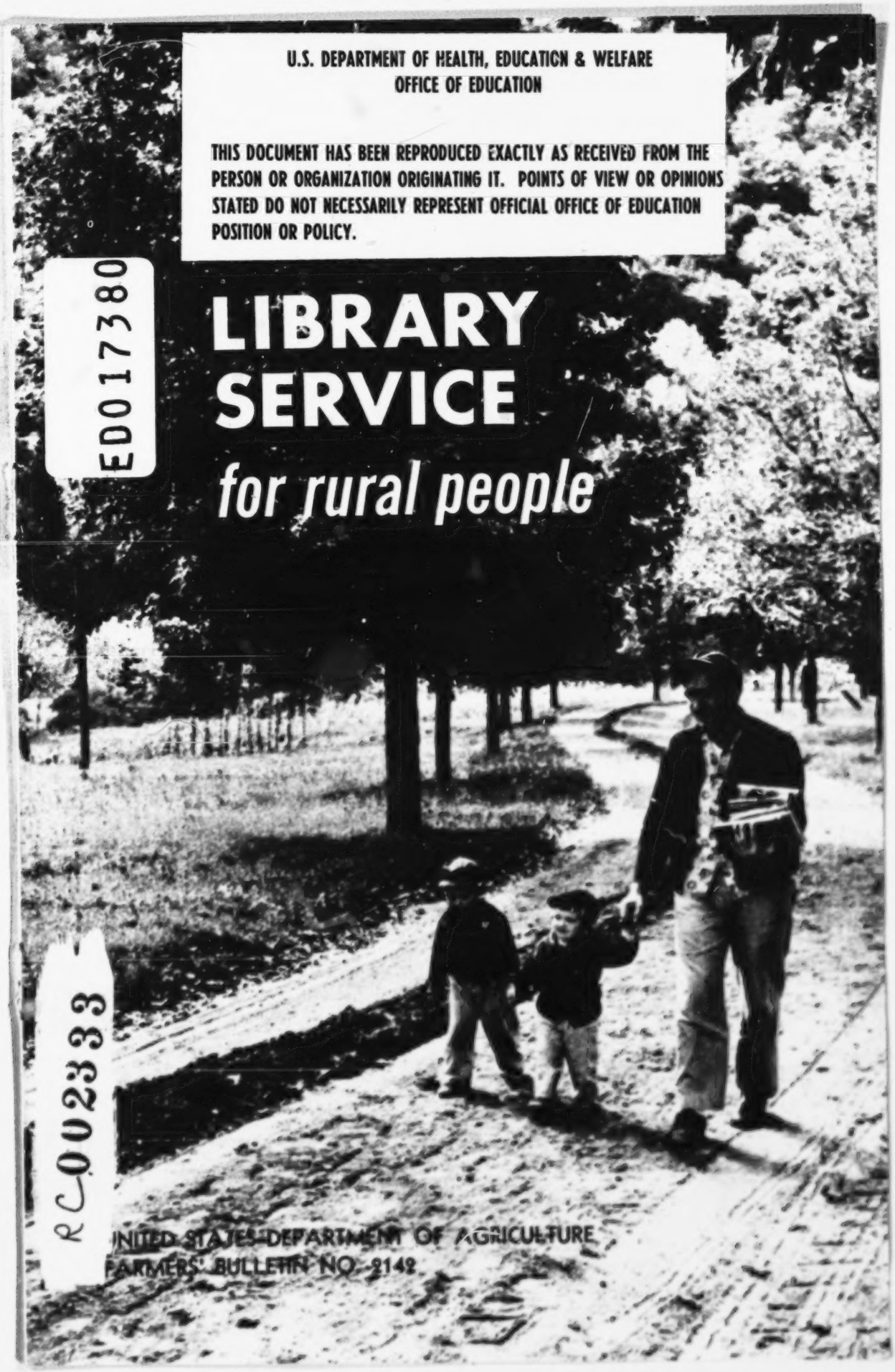
LIBRARY SERVICE

for rural people



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This bulletin was prepared for the Department of Agriculture by a committee of the American Library Association headed by Hannis S. Smith, Director of Libraries, Minnesota State Department of Education. The Library Services Branch, U.S. Office of Education, acted as adviser.

Cover photograph: A rural citizen takes his two children to the bookmobile of the Mass. Division of Library Extension.

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LIBRARY SERVICE FOR RURAL PEOPLE

RURAL LIBRARY SERVICE TODAY

One afternoon last spring, John walked slowly down the country road from his home to the general store. He had just returned home to the family farm after many years overseas as a medical missionary. His thoughts were on his boyhood . . . his youth . . . the many changes which had taken place in the 10 years since his last visit. After reaching the store and finding a small crowd there, John enjoyed renewing old friendships and meeting the younger people.

Once inside the store he looked around curiously. He was pleasantly surprised to see shelves of books—

Fig. 1. Facts can now support arguments in "discussions" in this general store—a deposit station of a regional library system.

books on farming, on agricultural economics, on homemaking, on arts and crafts, and also recent fiction by authors whose names were new to him. There were books for children and young people, with especially attractive ones for the pre-school age child. They were library books . . .

While he was browsing through the books, a large van truck drew up at the front of the store, its visible side boldly labeled—"BOOKMOBILE." Inside he found a librarian answering questions and helping people find the books they wanted. Others—as though they had done it many times before—were finding books for themselves. The storekeeper was going back and forth from his shelves to the bookmobile busily returning books already read, and selecting replacements.

After asking a few questions, John learned that the bookmobile with its load of over 2,000 books stopped at this country store on a regular schedule. It visited a number of different communities each day, covering a large part of the county and parts of two others, returning every 2 weeks. There were other bookmobiles serving the rest of the large area.

This was part of the public library service, free to all, supported by taxes. John could borrow books by the armload—his only obligation was to return them the next time the bookmobile came. And, if the books he got from the bookmobile did not last until the next visit, he could borrow more from the small collection at the general store.

When talking about this experience later, John remarked that of all the changes which had been made—pavement on the highway, more automobiles, new Sunday-school rooms at the church—this library service was the best new thing added to the community during the 10 years he had been away.

Bookmobile service is not yet established throughout the entire country, but this and other modern public library services are available in more

Fig. 2. Inside a busy bookmobile.

Fig. 3. No matter how rugged the road or remote the hamlet, bookmobiles get through.

than 900 counties. The residents of these counties can get more than books to answer a wide variety of their personal needs. Modern libraries provide information on many subjects, give advice and assistance in planning club programs, and provide aids and guides for study programs. Many of them now have children's story hours, films and phonograph records for education and pleasure and provide opportunities for participation in informal group discussions on books and films.

The Values of Public Library Service

Basically, every community—every person, young or old—needs to have a local source of reliable information on which to base sound judgments and wise actions on many matters of personal and public concern; information on ways of making a living and aid in understanding their community, the Nation, and the world.

Your modern public library helps satisfy these needs. The modern library is a gigantic service agency. It must be efficiently organized. Its strength lies in skilled, informed personnel, quantities of books, magazines, films, pictures, recordings and pamphlets. There must be materials for all ages, adequate equipment, suitable housing and also a sufficient annual budget to keep the operation in high gear.

Fig. 4. A kindergarten story hour is in progress.

Fig. 5. This library is one of many serving millions—but 27 million people do not have access to local public libraries.

Service of this kind is available to millions. Yet, in 1956, there were some 27 million Americans who did not have access to local public libraries. Ninety percent of the 27 million were rural people. Another 53 million Americans had access to only inadequate public library service. Again, most of these lived in rural areas or in the fringes around larger cities. There is ample evidence that, given the opportunity to use good convenient public library service, rural people frequently use it more than do city folk.

The Response to the Need

One of the problems often raised in rural areas is the apparent difficulty of providing good library service where towns are small and rural people are widely scattered. The fact that this problem has been solved by pioneering, experimentation, and demonstration may not be widely enough known. The solution is relatively simple: People have taken the basic solution worked out by large city libraries—central library, well-located branches, and mobile libraries—and adapted it to rural areas.

The idea of rural public library service is not really new—the first "bookmobile" goes back to horse-and-buggy days—but knowledge of how modern, adequate service can be given economically in rural areas is fairly recent. Today's rural library service is at about the same stage of development that city library service was 50 years ago. We know how to go about providing good rural library service—but so far have done relatively little about it!

But things *are* stirring in rural America. The rapidity of modern communications, improved rural schools, the increasing numbers of rural youth who go on to high school and college, and the increasing amenities in rural life such as electricity, are all bringing changes.

Rural people today have the same kinds of economic and "job" problems and the same need to understand national and international events that city people have. Their curiosity is stimulated by the same newspapers, magazines, radio and TV shows. They have the same cultural interests. And now—finally—they are beginning to have similar amounts of leisure and access to a wider range of community services for education, culture, and recreation.

A PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM IN A RURAL AREA

When the question arises as to the best ways of obtaining the best possible public library service, it is well to examine current thought on library development. Systems with stress on cooperation and local autonomy are now considered to provide the best approach. The new public library standards, for example, are no longer based on the individual library but rather on systems of libraries.

This idea of systems is perhaps best understood through a description of a library system serving 4 counties with a total population of about 100,000. This library system was organized after a citizen campaign by the joint action of the four county governing bodies. The annual budget is provided by county taxes with each county paying its prorata share. In some States, such libraries also receive annual grants from the State; but in this particular State, there are no grants. The library is governed by a library board of eight members, two from each county, who are appointed by their county governing bodies. This board appoints the head librarian, and determines operating and service policies.

Staff

To provide service to the 4 counties, this library system has a staff of 13 professionally trained librarians and 36 other library workers, some of whom are part-time, including typists and bookmobile drivers. Inservice training programs, conducted by the head librarian with the help of the State library extension agency, help all of these people do a better job in their own special assignments.

Location

The largest city in the area, with a population of nearly 20,000, is the shopping center for the four counties. Logically it is the best location for the library center which doubles both as the local public library and as the headquarters for the regional library system. Here, the library performs all the administrative and clerical "chores", and behind the scenes work, which must be done if the library is to

Fig. 6. Behind the scenes work is carried on in the regional library system headquarters.

Fig. 7. What will she find? She will find inspiration, she will become informed, and she will be entertained.

do its job effectively and economically. The central processing office "turns books into *library* books" by cataloging and preparing them for use by the public. It is from this center that the book distribution and exchanges with other libraries takes place, and it is from here that bookmobiles load up and go out to the four counties.

Operation

There are 11 smaller local libraries in 11 different towns in the 4 counties. Each of these maintains regular hours with a resident librarian in charge. All have collections varying from hundreds to thousands of books which are exchanged with the headquarters and with each other as rapidly as they are finished by readers in the local community. This greatly increases the number and variety of books available to each of them and makes for maximum use of all books in the four counties. Collections include books for young and old—for information, for recreation, and for inspiration.

Only three of these local libraries were in existence before the regional system was formed. The other eight have been established since that time by the regional library working with local communities. The three established libraries decided to join in with the system but at first kept their own books rigidly separated from those which came from the regional library. However, since the regional book collection has grown, and the number of books available to these libraries has increased, they are now beginning to turn most of their older books over to the regional library in order to have room for newer and more up-to-date books on their shelves. They have found that they not only have more books but also more new books available than ever before as they can now draw upon regional resources.

These libraries have retained their individuality and autonomous character while benefiting from the library system. A recent visitor to one of them was "astonished to see how many good books—and new books—you have. How do you do it in such a small town?"

The library system operates three bookmobiles. The timing of bookmobile stops is planned so that every resident will have library service within a mile of his house at least twice a month.

Services to Individuals

One of the keys to the success of this kind of library operation is that everybody in all four counties may use any of the libraries or the bookmo-

Fig. 8. Discussion groups and film showings are programmed for adults.

biles wherever and whenever it is most convenient for them to do so. Its services and materials are of interest to people of all ages, from pre-school children to the aged. There are library programs of all kinds for different ages ranging from story-hours for children to films and other programs for adults and senior citizens.

Fig. 9. Shipping clerks in the Traveling Library of the Wisconsin Free Library Commission prepare packages of books for mailing to rural areas.

This library system is relatively new, but it already has over 100,000 books—all new within the last 10 years. Even the oldest classics are there in fresh new copies. All of the library's books have been selected to fit the needs and interests of the users. If the title asked for is not on the shelf, it can be sent out from headquarters on the next regular delivery or on the regular visit by the bookmobile. If it is a rush request, it can even be mailed directly to the reader.

A wide variety of magazines and pamphlets can be borrowed. The library lends musical and spoken recordings and has a collection of well-selected educational 16-mm. films. These films are exchanged on a regular schedule with other libraries in the State so that within a year many different ones are available.

Services to Groups

Through the library's program planning service to organizations, club

chairmen learn about local resources for programs, including discussion leaders, outside speakers, films, and special exhibits. The Homemakers, service clubs, garden and hobby clubs, and church societies use this service frequently.

The library offers an annual institute for community leaders, bringing in specially trained people from the State university to help public officials, club officers, and other interested citizens learn the newest methods of working together for better community life.

One very worthwhile activity is carried out in cooperation with the local chapters of one of the men's civic clubs. Ceiling projectors and projected books are furnished to the bedridden. These projectors and books were purchased by the civic club, and they are kept at the library to be delivered to invalids and shut-ins by club members or bookmobiles.

The library also sponsors several informal discussion series. In each of these, the members of the groups have planned or selected their own programs and subjects which may include great books, international affairs, mental health, and child development. In addition, the library supplies study materials for discussions on international understanding which are being conducted by the county federations of home demonstration clubs.

This entire adult education program for the library system has been designed to fit the four-county community which it serves. The library board has stated that community needs will always be taken into consideration. This is the kind of library which can stimulate interest in library use, and promote better reading for the cultural and educational advantage of its users and its community.

Fig. 10. Libraries that loan recordings for home use have found this service very popular.

Library Materials

The modern public library—no matter where it is or whom it serves—must have a good supply of books, magazines, pamphlets, films, recordings, and many other kinds of useful library materials. To give good service and keep up-to-date, a public library must add new titles of interest to children, young people, and adults at a rate of about 5,000 per year. Since many more books are issued annually in the United States, the problem becomes one of selection. This is one of the most important functions of a library.

No single individual commands a complete knowledge of every subject in our modern world—even the best librarians must use various aids in the selection of new material. There are basic catalogs and periodical listings which evaluate books with respect to

their completeness, usefulness, and the educational level which they require of the reader.

The good public library systematically builds its collection of materials to fit the needs of the community which it serves. It supplies the many books which every library worthy of the name has in its collection and keeps up to date on the many subjects (such as science) which are of importance to modern man. It keeps abreast of the fine creative writing of our own as well as past eras, and it supplies its users with materials which shed light on the major controversies of our times.

Keeping a library up to date includes withdrawing old books as well as adding new ones. Worn, or torn, books are discarded systematically; and the library must also check its collection frequently to be sure that the books it has on its shelves are factually up to date. The great books of all time should also be kept alive and fresh by offering them in attractive, well-printed, clean copies.

Qualified Librarians

One of the most useful definitions of a public library states simply that "it is a librarian with a sufficient supply of books in contact with the public." This places an appropriately high value on a good librarian. Adequate public library service requires people who are professionally educated to give it. A modern rural public library system is under the direction of a professional librarian and has other professionals on the staff with special abilities in adult reading, children's and young people's services, or reference.

Fig. 11. Many young people are finding their careers in library work.

There must also be clerical personnel, drivers for bookmobiles, and community library assistants who provide the direct contact with users in each community. The latter are usually local residents who are keenly interested in libraries but have no special training. Inservice training programs and workshops can be used to help these people do a better job. Many of the State library extension agencies conduct training programs to help supply qualified people, or to help local librarians already employed in small public libraries become better qualified for their jobs.

Financing Rural Library Service

Library service—like any other public service such as police protection and public health—costs money. People know that a good public school requires so much per pupil to operate. Librarians, concerned with giving the best service for the tax dollar, began some years ago to determine how

much good library service costs for each person to be served. The important fact that showed up is that it costs more per person to serve a few people than it does to serve many.

To take a simple example, let us say that a community of 50,000 people appropriates $4 per capita for its library service and another community of 100,000 appropriates $2 per capita. The annual budget of the two libraries is the same. They can keep open about the same number of hours, maintain much the same type of library services, and purchase about the same number of books covering the same range of age levels and reader interests. But one library is serving twice as many people as the other. Recent careful studies indicate that if a library is to be organized and supported economically and efficiently, the 100,000 population mark is the beginning of real efficiency and economy.

How Good Is a Library?

The quality of public library service can be measured. A committee from the American Library Association worked for several years on a way of measuring local public library services. Its report was published by the Association in 1956, under the title, "Public Library Service; A Guide to Evaluation, With Minimum Standards."

This booklet is available for loan in many public libraries, and it may be purchased from the American Library Association. It is a guide for measuring both the quantity and quality of public library services, containing many suggestions helpful to people planning to establish new public library services and also to those wishing to improve the services which they now have.

ORGANIZING A LIBRARY SYSTEM

So far, we have discussed the need for rural library services and what good library service is. The burning question for the 27 million Americans without public library service is: How can they get good public library service established to serve them? And, for the 53 million others whose service is inadequate, the question is: How can they bring their public library service up to adequate levels?

Public libraries are established and grow to adequacy because enough people want them and make their wants known to the public officials who have the legal authority to establish library service and appropriate money or levy taxes for its support. These people need to know many things if they are to get started right and build a successful library movement. For example, they need to know: (1) The State laws under which library service must be organized; (2) what interest is being shown and what is being done by like-minded people in neighboring areas; and (3) what kinds of help, financial, advisory, and otherwise, may be available to them.

Fig. 12. A librarian helps a younger and an older reader in their book selection problems.

Library Services Act

Because the lack of library facilities is greatest in the rural areas of our Nation, the Federal Government—with the passage of the Library Services Act in 1956—has joined with local communities and State governments in overcoming the handicaps of sparse populations and lack of concentrated library resources. This 5-year grant program has as its specific purpose the stimulating and further extension of public library services in rural areas.

The library services bill, passed by the 84th Congress, became Public Law 597 on June 19, 1956. Major provisions of the act are as follows:

The act authorizes an appropriation of $7,500,000 annually for 5 years for grants to the States for the extension and improvement of rural public library service.

Rural area is defined as any place of 10,000 population or less, according to latest U.S. census. However, funds may be utilized by urban libraries to extend service to rural areas.

The State library extension agency in each State prepares and submits to the U.S. Commissioner of Education a plan, which will, in its judgment, assure the use of the funds to maximum advantage.

Funds under a State plan may be used for salaries, books, and other library materials, library equipment, and other operating expenses, but not for the erection of buildings or purchase of land.

Funds are allotted to the States on the basis of their rural population and are matched by the States on the basis of their per capita income. Funds unpaid to a State for any fiscal year remain available for one succeeding fiscal year.

To remain eligible for a Federal grant, a State must maintain its expenditures for all public library service at least at the same level as in fiscal 1956; and State and local expenditures for rural public library service must not fall below the 1956 level.

The determination of the best use of funds, the administration of public libraries, the selection of personnel and library books and materials—insofar as is consistent with the purpose of the act—shall be reserved to the States and their local subdivisions.

The U.S. Commissioner of Education is authorized to make studies, investigations and reports as to the values, methods, and results of the various State demonstrations under the act.

Fig. 13. Friendliness is an important factor in library service.

The State Library Extension Agency

Every State now has an agency which is charged with the responsibility for helping to develop more and better library service. A list of these agencies with their addresses is given on page (19). They have various names and are organized in a number of different ways, but they are alike in at least four ways: (1) They keep up-to-date information on how libraries are organized, operated, and supported in the State; (2) they offer advice and assistance to help local groups get library service started; (3) they administer any program which the State has developed under the recent Federal Library Services Act; and (4) they compile statistics on the services and costs of library service in the various political subdivisions of the State. In the States which provide State-aid for public libraries, this agency has the responsibility for administering the aid funds.

Rural people, interested in starting or improving library service, should write to their State library extension agency for information and advice. They will secure the necessary basic information on the State's library laws, the overall plans which the State has worked out to secure wider coverage of library services as well as information on financial aids which may be available for establishing or improving rural library services. They can often secure the service of an especially qualified library worker who can come out to help them determine the best library pattern for their particular area.

State Plans for Library Development

One thing which all State plans for library development have in common is the fact that they are tailor-made for the individual State; therefore, they differ greatly in details.

Since the end of World War II, a great many States have sponsored or conducted surveys of library service and development. These surveys usually were made by teams of librarians, economists, sociologists, and other educators. They have been aided or financed by library associations, colleges and universities, foundations, statewide community service organizations, and various State agencies including the State library extension agency. Many of these surveys have been published and are available from State sources.

The feature that most surveys and plans have in common is the stress they place on the development *of systems* of libraries which serve wide areas and sizable populations. Many States are planning to use the Federal aid to help carry out recommendations made by the surveys.

The average library user or citizen will wonder about this emphasis on the development of library systems which cover either entire counties or combinations of several counties. The answer becomes apparent in looking at individual counties and their available library tax base. Alone most counties could not afford the kind of library service described earlier; and many of those counties which might afford it would usually not be justified in making such extensive expenditures for their relatively few people. A good library system can serve thousands of people *more* efficiently and more economically than can a single small library working alone.

These library systems can cover any kind of "natural" region which has good highways and other transportation facilities. The only reason that most States are using the county as the unit of government concerned is because counties are usually the largest political units below State level, and there must be a legal governmental taxing authority involved if the library system is to receive tax support.

Many States have special legislation which permits counties to join together to offer library services. These multicounty, or regional libraries as they are sometimes called, are regarded by library experts as one of the best solutions to the problem of adequate library organization and support in rural areas.

The American Library Association stresses the importance of planning for the State as a whole. This approach assures complete coverage and efficient operating units which can give adequate service. Some of these plans divide the State into a few regions suitable for coverage by large library systems. In larger States, there may be many of these proposed regions, or individual counties may be large enough in population to support good libraries. In some smaller States, a single library system covering the entire State may be the solution. In every case, however, these State plans are based on careful study of local needs and circumstances.

The State library agency bridges the gap until good local library service is available, by lending collections of books to communities and schools or a few books at a time by mail directly to individuals. As fast as county or regional libraries are established, the State agency devotes its time to supplying more-specialized and technical books which, because of limited demand, the county or regional library does not feel justified in buying. In some States, material for study, debate, and club use is also available from the extension division of the State university.

National Library Agencies

Individuals, local libraries, and State library extension agencies will be particularly interested in help available from national agencies such as the Library Services Branch in the Office of Education of the U.S. Department of

Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D.C. Their service consists of research, statistical, consultative, and information activities on library matters and extends to public, school, college, university, special, and State libraries. This office administers the Library Services Act.

The American Library Association (50 East Huron Street, Chicago 11, Ill.), with a membership of over 20,000 is the national organization of libraries, librarians, library board members, and friends of libraries. It works with State library extension agencies, giving general advice and information on library promotion and establishment. It operates through its staff, publications, conferences, and its relations with other national agencies and governmental bodies.

Citizen Groups

Citizen interest and action in improving and extending library services are of primary importance since library services belong to citizens and are established in order to serve them—illustrated most strikingly, perhaps, by more than 35,000 men and women who serve without compensation on the boards of more than 7,500 public libraries in the United States.

This interest is by no means confined to library board members. Through individuals and through organized groups, it has expressed itself in various ways through the years. The individual citizen can do much to promote understanding of the library and to build good will. The newspaper editor, the citizen who writes to the contributors' column in the newspaper, the individual who shows himself interested in the library project—every person who uses the library service—all can be helpful.

Informal organized support of libraries is also not new on the American scene. In many communities groups of men and women, organized primarily for other purposes, have been instrumental in obtaining special tax levies for libraries, increased appropriations, bond issues for new buildings, or better library legislation. Such organizations include women's clubs, service clubs, parent-teacher associations, farm organizations, voters' leagues, labor unions, the junior chamber of commerce, and many more. Librarians and library board members work closely with these groups and are frequently identified with one or more of them as advisory members. It is thus possible to stimulate and foster greatly increased cooperation.

Fig. 14. The needs of many people are met through books. A lawyer is selecting a biography for recreational reading.

Finally, there are the Friends of the Library—groups organized more specifically to become acquainted with the services of libraries and to help interpret their program to their communities. Such groups have grown out of the realization that libraries and library board members *alone* cannot perform the common task of making the library a real educational force.

In addition to local Friends of the Library groups, variously named, some groups of citizens, interested in library service, are organized on a statewide basis. There are at least 36 such State groups which include trustee organizations in our country today. Their expressed concern is primarily for better library legislation, the development of strong State library agencies, and the extension of library service throughout their States.

The Importance of Local Initiative

Regardless of how much aid and assistance may be available to the local community from State or national levels, the key to local library development still rests in the hands of local citizens. State laws usually require official action by county governing bodies acting singly or in cooperation with their neighboring counties to establish rural public libraries. County governments are not going to establish library service and provide the necessary tax funds for its support until it is a certainty that people want this service. This can be found out only from a concerted expression from the people themselves.

As the result of local interest and initiative, many of our communities now have countywide or regional library service. No general course of action can be recommended which would cover the situation in every State or every local area, but the following general suggestions can serve as a beginning.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

For Immediate Book Needs

If you have no local community library and until a county or regional library has been developed, you may want to—

(1) Write to your State library extension agency for individual books by mail.

(2) Ask one of your local organizations to borrow a collection of books (traveling library) from the State library extension agency *after* you have helped to find a good place for it and a good person to check out the books to the reader.

But, do not let these interim solutions prevent the development of good local library service in your area.

For a County or Regional Library

A county or regional library movement may spring from the interest of one person or one organization. From this small beginning must come interest and action by all kinds of people in all parts of the county or region

and by many organizations. Here are some of the steps as outlined by the American Library Association:

(1) *Write to the State library extension agency at the State capital.* Find out about the laws under which a library can be established in your State. Find out about the particular type of library service that would best fit your county or region.

(2) *Talk to other people you think would be interested.* See that the farmers, businessmen, school officials, housewives, friends, and neighbors are well informed about the proposal and understand the details of the library project. To be successful it must be a real citizen's movement. Among those to be consulted at the beginning are the county superintendent of schools and his supervising teachers, the county agricultural agent and county home demonstration agent, members of county governing bodies, and representatives of such civic organizations as community clubs, men's clubs, veterans' organizations, cooperatives, women's clubs, and farm organizations active in the county. If librarians and trustees in the area are active, work with them too.

(3) *Organize an active committee from the whole county or region.* The committee must have an alert chairman and include men and women representative of all interests and groups. In the early stages of the campaign they should see newspaper editors and use the radio and television. But they should keep in mind the value of person-to-person discussion and not depend only on mass communications. Printed material, such as an attractively printed leaflet or folder on the county library plan, should be available for distribution. The committee should hold frequent meetings at which plans can be made for local community programs on this subject.

Fig. 15. Congratulations at the signing of a bi-regional contract in Alabama.

(4) *Invite a worker from the State library extension agency to a county or regional meeting.* People will have done enough thinking about the county or regional library by this time so that they can begin asking more specific questions about how it really would work and how much it will cost. The State worker can also discuss library needs and the legal organization of the county or regional library.

(5) *When all the steps have been taken to inform people, draw up a definite plan for an appropriation with the officials of the county or region.* Before approaching the county board of commissioners with this request you should be ready to answer the questions they will probably ask. They are faced with budget requests from many groups and cannot adequately evaluate the library's needs unless convincing explanations are offered. It may be advisable to visit the individual members in advance to explain just what you want and why, for money is always scarce and there never seems to be a "good" year.

(6) *Obtain formal action on the plan by the necessary governing body.* The committee must "sell the idea" for the county or regional library before the request for its establishment is presented officially. The American Library Association advises that the budget request be adequate to provide the quality and quantity of library staff, books, and other library materials and equipment described earlier. It is best not to ask for too little since that invites failure of the project. Experience indicates that if you have a good case, you are likely eventually to get what you need, even if it takes several years of effort.

For the State as a Whole

A State organization may help its smaller units get the library service they need by action for the State as a whole. The American Library Association suggests that the State leader or group may—

(1) Obtain information (by writing to or visiting the State library extension agency) on the State's plan for developing local library service, on the State law that permits the establishment of county or regional libraries, on any State aid available, or on campaign materials for obtaining State aid.

(2) Report local book needs and interest in library service to the State library extension agency.

(3) Distribute State agency leaflets on library needs and plans.

(4) Work with other State groups to strengthen the State library extension agency.

(5) Cooperate with State library associations in programs to provide or promote more complete library service to all residents of a State.

(6) Sponsor appropriate legislative action for the development of library service for all the people.

An up-to-date list of *State library extension agencies* appears on pages 19 and 20.

CONCEPT OF LIBRARY SYSTEMS

The following material is quoted from "Public Library Service; A Guide to Evaluation, With Minimum Standards," issued by the American Library Association, 1956.

"Achieving standard library facilities presents special difficulties in small cities, scattered suburbs, towns, villages, and rural areas. Even with substantial financial effort, the small locality is often not able to raise enough money to buy the books needed and to employ the requisite professional personnel. For these reasons the many smaller libraries in the country have usually not approached the range and quality of service specified in national standards.

"Yet the need for and ability to use library service, in variety and quality, are no less in the suburb and the country than in the city. . The modern American, in large place or small, has wide interests and can use facts to improve his way of life. Similarly, the benefits to him and his children from the services of skilled librarians, who can anticipate and locate what he wants and who can guide him in using and interpreting resources, are no less than the benefits to his city cousin.

"The problem is similar to that of the provision of school and hospital facilities. Ways have been found to bring such facilities for rural and small-town people up to minimum standard. The organization of library resources, however, has continued to depend on small isolated units that have very little connection with more substantial resources in larger places.

Fig. 16. Books help the farm family in many ways.

Fig. 17. The word "bookmobile" has been translated into many languages. Books are being brought to the rural areas of Puerto Rico by a "biblioteca rodante."

"Two clear and significant characteristics of present-day life open the way for a solution to the problem: modern transportation and communication, and co-operation among units and levels of government. Even as modern transportation and communication make it possible to bring people at a distance into good medical facilities or to bring special medical facilities out to them, so it is possible to go to or to bring out specialized library resources. Even as governmental units co-operate to improve school, road, and other services by joint effort, so the same co-operation can apply to library facilities.

"Libraries working together, sharing their services and materials, can meet the full needs of their users . . ."

DIRECTORY OF STATE AND TERRITORIAL LIBRARY EXTENSION AGENCIES

ALABAMA—Public Library Service Division, State of Alabama, Montgomery 5.

ALASKA—Department of Library Services, Alaska Office Bldg., Juneau.

ARIZONA—Department of Library and Archives, Phoenix.

ARKANSAS—Arkansas Library Commission, 506½ Center St., Little Rock.

CALIFORNIA—State Library, Library-Courts Bldg., Sacramento 9.

COLORADO—State Library, Department of Education, 320 Capitol Bldg., Denver 2.

CONNECTICUT—Bureau of Library Services, Department of Education, P.O. Box 2219, Hartford 15.

DELAWARE—Library Commission for the State of Delaware, Dover.

FLORIDA—State Library Board, Tallahassee.

GEORGIA—Division of Instructional Materials and Library Service, Department of Education, Atlanta 3.

GUAM—Nieves M. Flores Memorial Library, Agana, Guam.

HAWAII—Library of Hawaii, Honolulu.

IDAHO—Idaho State Library, 615 Fulton St., Boise.

ILLINOIS—State Library, Centennial Memorial Bldgs., Springfield.

INDIANA—State Library, Indianapolis 4.

IOWA—State Traveling Library, Historical Bldg., Des Moines 19.

KANSAS—Traveling Libraries Commission, 801 Harrison, Topeka.

KENTUCKY—Library Extension Division, Box 87, Berry Hill, Frankfort.

LOUISIANA—State Library, Baton Rouge.

MAINE—State Library, Augusta.

MARYLAND—Division of Library Extension, Department of Education, 301 W. Preston St., Baltimore 1.

MASSACHUSETTS—Division of Library Extension, Department of Education, 200 Newbury St., Boston 16.

MICHIGAN—State Library, 125 E. Shiawassee St., Lansing 13.

MINNESOTA—Library Division, Department of Education, State Office Bldg., St. Paul 1.

MISSISSIPPI—Library Commission, 405 State Office Building, Jackson.

MISSOURI—State Library, State Office Bldg., Jefferson City.

MONTANA—State Library Extension Commission, South Ave. and Middlesex, Missoula.

NEBRASKA—Nebraska Public Library Commission, Lincoln 9.

NEVADA—Nevada State Library, Carson City.

NEW HAMPSHIRE—State Library, 20 Park St., Concord.

NEW JERSEY—Division of the State Library, Archives and History, Department of Education, State House Annex, Trenton 7.

NEW MEXICO—State Library Commission, P.O. Box 4158, Santa Fe.

NEW YORK—New York State Library, State Education Department, Albany 1.

NORTH CAROLINA—State Library, Raleigh.

NORTH DAKOTA—State Library Commission, Liberty Memorial Bldg., Bismarck.

OHIO—State Library, State Office Bldg., Columbus 15.

OKLAHOMA—Oklahoma State Library, State Capitol, Oklahoma City 5.

OREGON—State Library, Salem.

PENNSYLVANIA—State Library, Education Bldg., Harrisburg.

PUERTO RICO—Library Division, Department of Education, Carnegie Library, San Juan.

RHODE ISLAND—State Library, Providence 2.

SOUTH CAROLINA—State Library Board, 1001-07 Main St., Columbia.

SOUTH DAKOTA—State Library Commission, 322 South Fort St., Pierre.

TENNESSEE—Public Libraries Division, State Library and Archives, Nashville 3.

TEXAS—State Library, State Capitol, Austin.

UTAH—Utah State Library, 609 East South Temple, Salt Lake City 2.

VERMONT—Free Public Library Commission, State Library Bldg., Montpelier.

VIRGINIA—Virginia State Library, Richmond 19.

VIRGIN ISLANDS—Bureau of Libraries and Museums, Department of Education, Box 390, Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas.

WASHINGTON—State Library, Olympia.

WEST VIRGINIA—Library Commission, 2004 Quarrier St., Charleston.

WISCONSIN—Wisconsin Free Library Commission, Madison 2.

WYOMING—State Library, Supreme Court Bldg., Cheyenne.

Fig. 18. Storyhour in a branch library in Hawaii.

READING SUGGESTIONS

1. *Public Library Service; A Guide to Evaluation, With Minimum Standards.* Chicago, American Library Association, 1956. 96 p. With suppl. *Costs of Public Library Service in 1956.*

2. Schenk, Gretchen K. *County and Regional Library Development.* Chicago, American Library Association, 1954. 272 p.

3. Stefferud, Alfred, ed. *Wonderful World of Books.* Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1953. 319 p. Paper bound edition published by New American Library of World Literature, Inc.

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SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION
FOR A COUNTY OR REGIONAL LIBRARY

(1) *Write to the State library extension agency.*

(2) *Talk to other people you think would be interested.*

(3) *Organize an active committee from the whole county or region.*

(4) *Invite a worker from the State library extension agency to a county or regional meeting.*

(5) *When all the steps have been taken to inform people, draw up a definite plan for an appropriation with the officials of the county or region.*

(6) *Obtain formal action on the plan by the necessary governing body.*